



Letter from the Delaware Tourism Office



Last week thousands of people from the First State and elsewhere crowded in the city of Wilmington and nearby towns to get a glimpse of Barack Obama and Joe Biden on their whistle-stop journey to Washington, D.C. Just days later, an estimated 1.8 million people of diverse backgrounds gathered in our nation's capital, braving long hours exposed to the winter chill, to witness these leaders take their places as the nation's first black president and Delaware's first vice president. In Delaware, new leadership, Jack Markell and Matt Denn, were sworn into the state's highest elected offices, followed by a full, public inaugural ceremony on Legislative Mall in Dover on Wednesday to celebrate the occasion.

Indeed, there is much to celebrate as we look forward to 2009 and beyond. In the words of Governor Markell in his inaugural address, "This storm will pass - a new day will arrive, and we must be prepared to seize that day, too, when it comes. We will not wait: We will start building today."

At the Delaware Tourism Office, my colleagues and I are acting now to continue the work of supporting and growing our state's tourism industry. That work begins with providing you – our industry partners – with the resources you need to reach your goals. Join us on Thursday, April 2 at the Heritage Shores Club in Bridgeville, Del. for the 2009 Governor's Tourism Conference, presented by Aloysius Butler & Clark.

At this year's Conference, you'll hear the latest trends and best practices in tourism destination marketing, business development, business financing strategies and new technology. Our Keynote Speaker, Bill Geist, is sure to inform and entertain you! Bill is a consultant, author and marketing expert. Our thanks to Trellist Marketing & Technology, our Exclusive Awards Luncheon Sponsor, for presenting this incredibly popular, nationally-renowned speaker.

Of course, the highlight of every Conference is the Governor's Tourism Awards. Don't miss the Awards
(cont.)

Luncheon, where we'll recognize four of your tourism industry peers. For more information about the Conference, see "Register Today" section below.

Everyday, I am following-up on leads with the large meetings and conventions market. I am continually responding to requests for proposals for large sporting events.

Recently, we organized a large venues group. It includes a network of Delaware's large facilities which offer the capacity to host events with more than 500 people. Among the projects on the table for this group, we are reviewing co-op advertising opportunities, organizing a referral system for securing large events, and planning a Meeting and Events Familiarization Tour in fall 2009.

We are continuing work on developing a Delaware Sports Commission. Involving both private and public partners, the Commission would promote, bid, recruit and secure sponsorships, as well as manage sporting events for Delaware. Other states with similar sports commissions have been successful, such as Pennsylvania's Sports Commission, "Ready, Set, Go Pa Sports." We held our first meeting late last year and held an advisory group follow-up meeting this month. DTO is working with University of Delaware Sports Management Program on the initiative.

A third meeting for a Tourism Disaster Seminar will be scheduled soon, which will feature a presentation from a guest speaker from Ocean City, Md. where they have a comprehensive tourism disaster plan in place.

I am pleased to report we received a lot of positive feedback following the grant workshop seminars. Thank you all who participated. For more information on the grants, see "Grant Deadlines Posted" below.

Finally, I am speaking at quite a few events this month. If you would like me to speak about the value of tourism to your group, let me know. And as always, please feel free to contact me anytime to share your ideas, hear more about our efforts at DTO or find out how you can get involved.

Warm regards,

Linda Parkowski

First Look



The Marketing and Communications Unit creates DTO's advertisements and promotional materials in-house. With the help of our friends and colleagues, this special welcome message from Governor Jack Markell was distributed to hoteliers throughout Delaware during the Obama-Biden inauguration.

First Impression

In every newsletter, you have the chance to recognize an exceptional tourism professional, someone making a behind-the-scenes difference in the industry.

This quarter, the Delaware Tourism Office would like to thank the staff and volunteers at each of our state's convention and visitors bureaus who helped distribute travel guides and a special message from Governor Markell to hoteliers statewide during the Obama-Biden inauguration. A warm thank you to the following individuals:

Kimberly Bailey-Thomas
Robin Coventry
Barbara Rafte
Jim Rafte
Rose Roberts

Cindy Small
Bill Sullivan
Scott Thomas
Sarah Willoughby

We know you worked late (and early the next morning). You demonstrated outstanding initiative, teamwork and partnership. Thank you, all!

First Sight



Snowy Winter in Middletown, Del. An early crossroads town, Middletown was originally a tavern stop about half-way on the old cart road that extends across the peninsula between Appoquinimink Creek in Odessa and Bohemia Landing on the eastern branch of the Bohemia River in Maryland; thus the name, "Middletown." The memorial at Cochran Square – the "Four Corners" – was originally erected to honor the memory of men killed in World War I. Today, it honors all war heroes.

We want your photos of Delaware! Upload your photos to the official Web site of the Delaware Tourism Office at: www.visitdelaware.com/photo_submissions.htm. We'll select one "**First Sight**" to feature in every e-newsletter. We might even use the images submitted for other tourism promotions.

First Step

The Delaware Tourism Office will be sending a representative to attend the Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) Conference Monday, Feb. 2 to Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009 in Vancouver, British Columbia. This Conference offers a unique opportunity for a DTO representative to meet top travel writers within our target international market -- Canada. The program includes a media marketplace with pre-scheduled appointments with Canadian travel journalists of 12 minutes each.

First Word

Did you hear the word? Here are just a few stories published in regional and national media outlets during the previous quarter (Oct. 1 to Dec.31, 2008):

Rehoboth Beach, Del.; *Out Traveler Magazine*, Fall

Finding History, Beaches and Pop Culture in Del.; *Los Angeles Times* (and picked up by the Associated Press wire), Oct. 28

Joe Biden's Delaware, *PeterGreenburg.com*, November

Cape Henlopen State Park; *American Profile Magazine*, November

Brandywine Valley; *Women's World*, November

Historic Odessa Christmas Celebration; *The Sunday Record*, Dec. 7

New Travel Guide Available Soon

The 2009-2011 Official State Delaware Travel Guide will be available by mid-February. The Delaware Tourism Office partnered with Trellist Marketing & Technology to produce the Guide. It features fresh editorial, new photography, creative illustrations, and a 5 by 8-inch format, making the publication more portable for visitors on the go. For the first time, the Guide also includes a dining listing and an "environmentally friendly" symbol for Green Lodging hotels within the accommodations directory.

Additionally, Trellist developed an interactive online guide to reach prospective visitors who use the Internet for their travel planning.

Stay posted for the official unveiling and press conference event, which will be scheduled soon!

The guide will be distributed nationally and internationally through DTO's fulfillment center, visitor information centers, convention and visitors bureaus, industry partners and by office staff at media and trade shows. To obtain copies of the Guide for your business or organization after the official unveiling, contact Kathy Krasulak at Kathryn.Krasulak@state.de.us.

Grant Deadlines Posted

The Delaware Tourism Office has posted the following opening and closing dates for the Tourism Grant applications:

- Grant applications were accepted starting January 19, 2009.
- Closing date: March 6, 2009 All applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. (Close of Business) at the DEDO office: 99 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901
- Awarding of Grants will be April 9, 2009

Additional information is available here:

<http://dedo.delaware.gov/tourism/grants.shtml>.

Register Today!



More than 200 tourism industry professionals from the Delaware region attended the 2008 Governor's Tourism Summit, held at the Chase Center on the Riverfront in Wilmington. The 2009 Conference will be held April 2 in Bridgeville.

Register for the Governor's Tourism Conference, scheduled Thursday, April 2, 2009 at the Heritage Shores Club in Bridgeville by visiting <http://dedo.delaware.gov/conf/2009/GTS.shtml>.

Registration will begin at 9:15 a.m. Sessions will run until 3:15 p.m.

Bill Geist is our Awards Luncheon Keynote Speaker. Bill is an award-winning consultant, author and marketing expert. In his dynamic presentation

“Maximizing Consumer Trends in a Down Economy: Developing New Products and Messages that Resonate,” Bill shares the latest generational and consumer trends with suggestions on how you can capitalize on new attitudes by creating unique products, packages and marketing messages. You'll hear how others are breaking through with unique experiential offerings as well as learn about exciting new marketing tactics that cost little...but can produce big. A fast-paced, 60-minute presentation that will arm you with ideas you can implement as soon as you return home.

Bill Geist is the President of Zeitgeist Consulting, a firm specializing in strategic planning, governance, convention center development and legislative issues for convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and communities.

He has provided consulting services to more than 100 Destination Marketing Organizations since 1995 and is a popular speaker on customer service, trends and marketing across North America. He is the author of *Destination Leadership for Boards* and a contributor to *Fundamentals of Destination Marketing*.

Prior to forming Zeitgeist Consulting, Geist served as the President/CEO of the Greater Madison (WI) Convention & Visitors Bureau and previously led the Kankakee County (IL) CVB where he landed the first multi-year contract ever awarded for the American Power Boat Association's National Outboard Championships.

DTO wishes to thank our sponsors and exhibitors for their support. Thank you to our Exclusive Title Sponsor, Aloysius Butler & Clark; the Exclusive Awards Luncheon Sponsor, Trellist Marketing & Technology; the Exclusive Media Partner Sponsor, Clear Channel Radio; and, the Conference Tote Bag Sponsor, *Southern Living* and *Coastal Living*. Sponsorships for the Program & Reference Book and the Internet Café (In-Kind) are still available. Contact Adam Berger at adam.berger@state.de.us for more information.

For additional information about session topics, speakers and registration, visit <http://dedo.delaware.gov/conf/2009/GTS.shtml> or contact Marketing Assistant Kate Kreppin at Catherine.Kreppin@state.de.us.

Winter 2009

Free Workshops in February

Downtown Delaware will offer free workshops to community leaders and retailers during the month of February at locations throughout the State.

The third quarterly Feature Presentation, titled “Business Retention: Stabilizing and Enhancing Key Downtown Merchants” is designed for downtown stakeholders. The presentation features retailing experts, Margie Johnson and Rick Ferrell, who will help attendees learn to identify at-risk businesses and discover proven methods to help retain these businesses in their communities. The presentation will be held simultaneously at University of Delaware locations in Sussex and New Castle Counties on Wednesday, Feb. 4 from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required by sending an e-mail to Zena.Tucker@state.de.us.

Margie Johnson will also speak at training workshops for Delaware retailers as part of DEDO’s “February Focus on Retailers!” Johnson, President of Shoptalk, will inspire retailers with tips and techniques for small businesses with her “Sustainable Success Strategies for 2009.”

Pre-registration is required. Register by contacting the local Main Street programs listed below:

- Tuesday, Feb. 3 lunch time in Milford: Downtown Milford Inc. 302-839-1180
- Tuesday, Feb. 3 evening in Dover: Downtown Dover Partnership 302-678-2940
- Thursday, Feb. 5 morning in Rehoboth: Rehoboth Beach Main Street 302-227-2772

Finally, Dan Bond, owner of the wildly successful Ladybug Shop in downtown Milford, will share his pathway to success using “Click and Mortar” Internet retailing to supplement “Brick and Mortar” sales in two additional workshops available to Delaware retailers in February. Bond together with his wife Rhonda, established the LadyBug Shop in downtown Milford in 2003. The store front and

“Click and Mortar” business is now the largest provider of ladybug themed gifts on the Internet and is a major contributor to the economic revitalization of historic downtown Milford, Del.

Pre-registration is required. Register by contacting the local Main Street programs below:

- Saturday, Feb. 7 from 10 a.m. to noon, Milford: Downtown Milford, Inc. 302-839-1180
- Wednesday, Feb. 25 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., Newark: Downtown Newark Partnership 302-366-7030

These training opportunities have been made available by USDA Rural Development, the Delaware Economic Development Office, and the University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration. Contact Diane Laird at 302-672-6834 or by e-mail at Diane.Laird@state.de.us for more information.

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